

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CPR-01

OMB-01 IO-10 /071 W

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R 031440Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8970

C O N F I D E N T I A L PCNGUE 2585

E.O. GDS

TAGS: OVIP, IR, CZ

SUBJECT: VISIT OF IRANIAN PRIME MINISTER

1. IRANIAN PRIME MINISTER HOVEJDA PAID OFFICIAL VISIT TO CZECH-SLOVAKIA SEPT 30 - OCT 2. COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED OCT2.
(EMBASSY ASSUMES TEXT AVAILABLE TO DEPARTMENT AND TEHRAN. MAIN OPERATIVE SENTENCE ON MIDDLE EAST CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI TROOPS FROM ALL ARAB TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967, SAFEGUARDING THE LEGAL NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE ARAB PEOPLE OF PALESTINE, AND RECOGNIZING RIGHTS OF ALL STATES IN THE AREA TO PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT. COMMUNIQUE ALSO ENDORSED EARLY CONVOCA-
TION OF A WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT.)

2. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE AT DINNER OCT, IRANIAN AMBASSADOR AMIR HOHAMMED ESFANDIARY HAD FOLLOWING TO SAY ABOUT PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: (A) VISIT HAD NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE. ASIDE FROM SYMBOLIC VALUE, IT DEALT WITH ECONOMIC-COMMERCIAL MATTERS. (B) A FEW YEARS AGO CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD BEEN IRAN'S MAIN TRADING PARTNER IN SOCIALIST WORLD, BUT SINCE THEN IT HAD SLUMPED BADLY; BOTH SIDES WANTED TO IMPROVE THIS SHOWING. (C) ON POLITICAL SIDE, CZECHS HAD NOT PUSHED ANY VIEW ON MIDDLE EAST. IN FACT BOTH PRIME MINISTER STROUGAL AND PRESIDENT HUSAK HAD ASKED HOVEJDA'S VIEWS, AND WHEN HE HAD STATED IRAN'S APPROVAL OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST AND OF NEW
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SINAI AGREEMENTS, CZECHOSLOVAKS DID NOT EXPRESS DIFFERENCE. ACCORDING TO ESFANDIARY, CZECHS DID NOT TRY TO PUSH ANY NEGATIVE VIEWS ON HOVEJDA, AND IN COMMUNIQUE TALKS THEY WERE NOT INSISTENT ON ANY STRONG POSITIONS. ESFANDIARY CLAIMED COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON MIDDLE EAST WAS MODERATE AND NOT HARMFUL TO U.S. POSITION. (EMBASSY MUST LEAVE DEPARTMENT TO JUDGE.) (D) ON ECONOMIC FRONT, SOME PROPOSALS WERE DISCUSSED WHICH WILL BE FORMALLY TAKEN UP BY BILATERAL MINISTERIAL COUNCIL WITHIN A FEW MONTHS. CZECHS (WHO HE SAID ARE ALREADY BUILDING LARGE MACHINE TOOL PLANT IN NORTHERN IRAN) PROPOSED SOME LARGE JOINT ECONOMIC PROJECTS FOR WHICH IRAN WOULD PROVIDE FINANCING AND CSSR TECHNOLOGY. CZECHS ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN GETTING SHARE OF NATURAL GAS FOR CZECHOSLOVAKIA OUT OF GAS WHICH NOW FLOWS TO FRG VIA IRAN-USSR-CSSR PIPELINE. (ESFANDIARY SAID IRANIANS WERE AWARE OF CSSR ENERGY SHORT-FALL FOR FUTURE NEEDS WHICH THEY MUST FILL FROM SOMEWHERE. ASKED ABOUT OIL, HE SAID CSSR IS NOT ASKING FOR IRANIAN OIL UNTIL ADRIATICA PIPELINE IS FINISHED UP THROUGH YUGOSLAVIA, BUT THEN THEY WILL WANT SOME.) (E) RECEPTION FOR HOVEJDA WAS CORDIAL AND TALKS GOOD. ESFANDIARY SAID HOVEJDA WAS HUMOROUS TALKER AND WAS HAPPY TO FIND STROUGAL INTELLIGENT AND WELL-BRIEFED BUT ALSO GOOD-HUMORED. TALK WITH HUSAK (WHICH HE SAID WAS SCHEDULED FOR 15 MINUTES OR SO BUT LASTED OVER AN HOUR) WAS BASICALLY REPETITION OF TALKS WITH STROUGAL. HOVEJDA STRESSED THAT IRAN FOLLOWED OWN INDEPENDENT POLICY, DIFFERING SOMETIMES WITH USSR, SOMETIMES WITH U.S.: BY THIS (ESFANDIARY SAID) HE HOPED TO DROP HINT THAT CSSR TRY DOING MORE OF THE SAME--BUT THE CZECHOSLOVAKS DID NOT RISE TO THE HING. (F) COMMUNIQUE SAID STROUGAL WAS INVITED TO IRAN; ESFANDIARY ALSO MENTIONED INVITATION TO SHAH TO VISIT CSSR. PERRY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL VISITS, COMMUNIQUE, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PRAGUE02585
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750346-0019
From: PRAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751083/aaaacwdb.tel
Line Count: 94
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 MAY 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <29 SEP 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF IRANIAN PRIME MINISTER
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, IR, CZ, XF, (HOVEYDA, AMIR ABAS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006